

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

José M. Torres, Ph.D.

September 18, 2019

Leadership Matters

This report provides the Board of Trustees with information regarding Academy activities and the progress that we are making toward achieving our IMSA Impact and Outcomes Statement and Priority Outcomes. I organize the Report of the President, where appropriate, around the IMSA Impact and Outcomes document:

Three pillars:

1. STEM Teaching and Learning
2. Operational Capacity
3. Stakeholder Engagement

One Strategy—Strengthen Employee Engagement and IMSA’s two priorities for Academic Year 2018-2019:

- Advance Equity and Excellence
- Implement Global Strategies (including Innovation Campus, Phase 1)

I provide information, updates and general observations with IMSA stakeholders, including IMSA employees, students, and parents via my [Personal Reflections](#) throughout the year.

STEM Teaching and Learning

Graduation

The Class of 2019 graduated June 1. We are very proud to send 198 of these graduating seniors to 73 different institutions this fall. 100 will attend an Illinois college/university including University of Illinois, IIT, University of Chicago, Loyola and Northwestern. 96 are headed farther from home to Stanford, Yale, MIT, Case Western Reserve, Purdue University and the United States Naval Academy just to name a few. Two of our IMSA graduates plan to study abroad.

Convocation

We began our school year with our Convocation on August 19. We welcomed the Class of 2022. Claudia Flores '93 was our guest speaker. She is Associate Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the International Human Rights Clinic at the University of Chicago. Alexandra Plattos Sulack '07 and Jo Marie Sison '97 returned to IMSA to provide our musical selections. Ms. Plattos Sulack is a performer, singer, teacher, and coach. Ms. Sison is a professional freelance violinist of over 10 years. The program, video and scripts can be found on Digital Commons [here](#).

Year of Inquiry, Next Steps

Last year, IMSA engaged in a Year of Inquiry, an in-depth investigation of a current challenge that significantly influences IMSA's work and mission. Last year's focus was on student mental health and well-being and resulted in three recommendations:

1. Implement an Academy Major Assessments Master Calendar
2. No homework be assigned over Extended Weekends and no major assessments on the first day of class following Extended Weekend
3. Increase focus on sleep education and incentivize positive sleep behaviors

We are working with appropriate IMSA faculty and staff to implement each of these recommendations.

Operational Capacity

Cabinet Retreat and Capacity Building

On July 22-23, I held a retreat with my Cabinet at Universal Technical Institute in Naperville. The objectives for the retreat were to set Academy priorities for the Academic Year 2019-2020; review and discuss data and comments gathered from IMSA staff, including faculty; and set targets for the IMSA Operational Excellence Dashboard. Over the past years, we continue to return to the topic of IMSA's institutional culture and creating a path of cultural change and alignment with our short and long-term goals. In addition to identifying two continuing priorities for this year (Equity and Excellence and Global Strategies), we established the targets for June 30, 2020 (see attached). We also highlighted three indicators we believe will require IMSA-wide efforts (what I like to say, "all hands on deck") to accomplish the targets. The three targets requiring "all hands on deck" effort from IMSA are:

- Number of contributions from IMSA community members to any body of knowledge from 622 to 1,001
- Number of alumni engaged from 719 to 1,400
- Percent of engaged employees from 34% to 40%

From June 24-26, Cabinet (with the exception of Katie Berger, who was on FMLA) and I participated in the **Human Performance Institute** two and a half day immersive course designed to transform the way we approach energy management to achieve sustained high performance. This course integrates the sciences of performance psychology, exercise physiology and nutrition, to help us maximize energy across four dimensions (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual) to create lasting behavior change. Ask my Cabinet or me about this experience. It has been life-changing for us.

Senior Leadership Development

Members from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), composed of IMSA staff with leadership responsibilities (10-month faculty leaders were not present), met on August 8. We discussed our IMSA Dashboard and proposed targets. We also established three teams to work on Wildly Important Goals (WIG) as a follow up to the 4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX) training from last year. The three WIG teams are based on the three targets described above

requiring “all hands on deck.” During our bi-monthly SLT meetings, we will meet in our WIG groups to plan and to execute on actions that support these indicators.

Stakeholder Engagement

Alumni Weekend

On July 20, I participated in our on campus Alumni reunion event and engaged with Alumni from the Classes of 1989, 2004, 2009 and 2014 individually and as a group.

Delegation from Mexico

On August 29, IMSA hosted a delegation from Mexico that included representatives from:

- ITESM (Technology College and High School of Monterrey)
- UNAM (National University of Mexico)
- Educando (a nonprofit group providing STEM curricula and training to teachers and school leaders in Mexico and Brazil)
- Several VIPs from the Chicago region, including the founder and CEO of Spanish Public Radio.

State Treasurer Michael Frerichs visits IMSA

State Treasurer Frerichs along with his Chief of Staff, G. Allen Mayer ‘90 visited IMSA, attended classes and toured the facilities, including the residential halls. Me and my leadership team spoke to our guests about the present and future needs of IMSA and solicited their support.

Meeting with State Superintendent

On September 12, I met with State Superintendent Dr. Carmen Ayala to provide her information on IMSA’s return on investment to the state and to update her on the \$800,000 four year grant we received from ISBE to create NGSS K-4 curricula and provide teacher training. I also provided her information on how we are using our data sharing agreement.

P-20 Council

I continue to be a member of Illinois’ P-20 Council, which “was established by the legislature in 2009 to foster collaboration among state agencies, education institutions, local schools, community groups, employers, taxpayers, and families, and to collectively identify needed reforms to develop a seamless and sustainable statewide system of quality education and support.” The P-20 Council meets quarterly.

President’s Student Advisory Council

I am continuing my Student Advisory Council this year and have held a couple of meetings with them. The purpose of this Council is to inform students of Academy initiatives and priorities, solicit their input on these initiatives, and to respond to questions and concerns that students have from “Administration.” At our first meeting, I collected a list of topics and questions to be discussed at future meetings. The students and I are excited about the opportunity to discuss our thoughts and concerns with each other.

President's Faculty Advisory Council

I am also continuing my Faculty Advisory Council this year. The purpose of this Council is to engage in a two-way dialogue between IMSA faculty and me on the short and long term future of IMSA. The President's Faculty Advisory Council is composed, ideally, of 10 to 15 faculty members or more. We will meet once per month, including more frequently in the fall semester. The first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10 from 4:30 to 5:30 in Horwitz.

Strengthen Employee Engagement

Community Learning Days—June 2019 and August 2019

This past Academic Year, we decided to distribute the responsibility for planning and delivering Community Day to our IMSA colleagues. This has resulted in increased engagement and involvement. It has also led to more sharing between and across functional areas at IMSA. At our June Community Day, faculty led Community Day. At our August Community Day, staff from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Steve and Jamie Center for Innovation and Inquiry led breakout sessions.

Town Hall and "Chat with the President"

During the summer, we held a Town Hall meeting for 12-month IMSA employees. This was designed to acknowledge that while our calendar revolves around the Academic Year, a lot of work at IMSA is completed by 12-month employees. We reviewed our IMSA Operational Excellence Dashboard and our proposed targets with them. I have also re-established regular "office hours" to be available to IMSA staff, students, and alumni (see attached). We held a second Town Hall on September 11.

Advance Equity and Excellence

We have developed a project plan to guide our work in equity and excellence. See attached for project outcomes, team members, milestones, budgets, etc. Rich Busby assisted the project manager, Dr. Adrienne Coleman. Traci Ellis serves as the sponsor for this project.

Global Strategies

We have developed a project plan to guide our work in global strategies. See attached for project outcomes, team members, milestones, budgets, etc. Rich Busby serves as the project manager. I serve as the sponsor of this project.

Leadership Update from Cabinet Members

Updates from my Cabinet are attached.

Advancement and Office of Public Affairs Update

Advancement

"Save a Seat" campaign donors were invited to Convocation on August 19 to celebrate the opening of the auditorium. Over \$400,000 in philanthropic gifts was raised from generous Alumni, friends and businesses to renovate the auditorium.

Since July 1, \$110,000 in grant funding has been secured by the Advancement office, including \$80,000 from Boeing for the Little STEAMers program benefiting three to five year olds in the Southern Illinois region; \$10,000 from PPG for the Center for Innovation & Inquiry STEM Pathways Program; and \$10,000 from Enbridge for the IMSA PROMISE Program.

Public Affairs

The office has been promoting its #1 school ranking in Illinois for the second year in a row and #2 in America on social media channels and campus signage.

Public Affairs created and mailed the 2020 IMSA Viewbook to approximately 16,000 prospective Illinois 8th and 9th grade students with high ability in math and science. In addition, geographically targeted Facebook ads are running for regional IMSA Admission recruitment events.

Under the guidance of Public Affairs, the Student Committee for IMSA's Advancement (SCIA) provided tours and classroom visits for special guests, including a delegation from Mexico on August 29 and State Treasurer Michael Frerichs and Chief of Staff G. Allen Mayer '90 on September 5.

Alumni Relations celebrated a successful Reunion weekend on July 20 bringing 203 visiting Alumni and their families back to campus, including the charter Class of 1989.